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FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT SECTION

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CHANGES AHEAD FOR STATE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

FEMA is changing the direction of the State Assistance Program (SAP). From its inception, the SAP was intended to improve the capability of the states to administer a floodplain management program. The SAP will soon be called the Community Assistance Program. The intention now is to improve the capability of local governments to administer a floodplain management program consistent with the NFIP. Floodplain management and other land use regulatory programs are most effectively handled at the local level of government. In order for the National Flood Insurance Program to work, the local administrators must be doing their work.

Tim Pool of this office and Tim Maywalt from the Denver office of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) performed a Community Assistance and Program Evaluation (CAPE) of the cities of Billings and Miles City in November. A CAPE involves meetings with local officials to improve overall administration of the National Flood Insurance Program. Approximately eight more CAPEs will be held in Montana by September 1985.

Holding CAPEs and other community assistance meetings will be an important emphasis of the new Community Assistance Program.

EMERGENCY PROGRAM SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION

The Emergency Phase of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) is scheduled to end by October, 1987. Congress has directed FEMA to convert the remaining communities in the Emergency Phase into the Regular Phase by that time.

When the NFIP was created, the intention was to perform a flood insurance study for all flood-prone communities. It is proving to be economically infeasible to study the remaining communities because of the high cost of performing detailed flood insurance studies. FEMA plans to convert those remaining in the Emergency phase into the Regular Program with existing data or by a limited detailed study. Existing data consist of Flood Hazard Boundary Maps (FHBMs) published by the Federal Insurance Administration currently available for the community. Existing data also includes studies performed by the USDA Soil Conservation Service or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. A limited detailed

study involves a study of greater detail than that associated with FHBMs, but with less detail than a full-scale flood insurance study.

FEMA contracted with Donnelly Marketing Information Services, a consultant that performed a demographic survey of 7,000 communities nationwide, to establish a priority ranking for studying non-participating communities or those still in the Emergency Phase. Criteria considered in their survey include existing property at risk in flood-prone areas, percentage of area in the floodplain, projected development in the community as a whole, and projected development in flood-prone areas. FEMA will use this survey as well as other factors, such as the number of flood insurance policies, to decide which communities will receive a flood insurance study, a limited detailed study, or be converted to Regular Program with existing data.

The towns of Saco in Phillips County and Valier in Pondera County have been converted into the Regular Program; no map was issued. FEMA has determined that flood hazards are minimal in these communities; thus, they could be converted without a map. No floodplain management regulations are required for their participation in the NFIP. Local officials should be aware that flood damage potential may still exist.

FEMA has entered into an agreement with the USGS to perform limited detailed studies. Very few new detailed flood insurance studies will be initiated for Montana by FEMA. Montana communities ranked much lower on the priority list than those in other states, especially along the Mississippi River or on the coasts.

The Soil Conservation Service within the U.S. Department of Agriculture has performed many flood hazard analyses and floodplain management studies. FEMA will convert many of these into flood insurance studies. This will allow the affected community to enter into the Regular Phase of the NFIP and residents can buy higher levels of flood insurance coverage.

The SCS recently completed a floodplain management study for the Milk River and Cherry Creek near Glasgow in Valley County. A study is scheduled for completion very soon for Big Pipestone Creek near Whitehall in Jefferson County. Another study has been initiated for streams in the Baker vicinity in Fallon County.

Communities that are in the transition from Emergency to Regular Phase include: Stillwater County, the Town of Twin Bridges, Richland County, the City of Sidney, Anaconda-Deer Lodge County, the cities of Harlem and Chinook, Blaine County, the City of Malta, and Phillips County. Flood insurance studies are nearing completion for these communities. A flood insurance study was recently initiated for Lake County.

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The list of those remaining in the Emergency Phase that must, to continue participating in the NFIP, enter the Regular program within the next few years are:

Baker	Hill County
Boulder	Hot Springs
Broadus	Jefferson County
Broadwater County	Livingston
Browning	Meagher County
Chester	Nashua
Circle	Park County
Columbia Falls	Roundup
Conrad	Saco
Culbertson	Townsend
Custer County	Treasure County
Dodson	Valier
Ennis	Valley County
Fairview	White Sulphur Springs
Fallon County	Whitehall
Glasgow	Wibaux
Havre	Wibaux County

Of these, Baker, Fallon County, Livingston, Park County, Valley County, and Whitehall could be converted to the Regular Phase with existing data studies performed by the SCS or the Corps of Engineers. Many communities with minimal flood-prone areas can be converted by using information in Flood Hazard Boundary Maps.

Communities that are now participating in the Regular Phase of the National Flood Insurance Program are:

Beaverhead County	Joliet
Belt	Kalispell
Big Horn County	Laurel
Billings	Lavina
Bozeman	Lewis and Clark County
Butte-Silver Bow County	Lewistown
Carbon County	Libby
Cascade County	Lincoln County
Choteau	Lodge Grass
Deer Lodge	Miles City
Denton	Missoula
Dillon	Missoula County
Drummond	Moore
East Helena	Philipsburg
Eureka	Powell County
Fergus County	Ravalli County
Flathead County	Red Lodge
Fromberg	Ryegate
Gallatin County	Sweet Grass County
Golden Valley County	Teton County
Granite County	Three Forks
Grassrange	Troy
Great Falls	Wheatland County
Harlowton	Whitefish
Helena	Yellowstone County

ORDERING MAPS

When ordering Flood Hazard Boundary Maps (FHBMs), Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), or Floodway and Flood Boundary Maps (FLOODWAY)

from FEMA, here are a few tips that may help in getting what you want with fewer problems.

When ordering less than six panels, you can use the NFIP toll-free telephone service (1-800-638-6620). An operator will assist you with your request. You will need to know the community name, NFIP Community Identification Number, and the panel numbers along with the suffix (if applicable) for each individual panel.

If the community has more than six panels that you wish to order, you will need to use the Map Order Form available from this office or the NFIP. The form asks for the same information needed for the telephone service. The form assures accuracy in ordering the maps, and can also be used for ordering less than six panels. Printing "county pull" in the County Name column will indicate that you want all the FIRMs that were published for that particular county.

To order the FLOODWAY and FLOOD BOUNDARY maps and the Flood Insurance Study Report, the community name and panel numbers are also needed. The FLOODWAY maps and study book can be ordered by calling 1-800-638-7148. If you use the order form instead, be sure to print FLOODWAY across the top of the form; otherwise you will receive the FIRM maps for the panels listed. Mail the form to Computer Data Systems, Inc., 6930 San Thomas Road, Baltimore, MD 21225.

FIRES CAUSE INCREASED RUNOFF

The devastating fires that burned across much of Montana this summer caused great losses and suffering to those who were affected. Unfortunately, the damage may not be over. Vegetation—grass, shrubs and trees—that retarded runoff and held the soils in place is now gone. Increased runoff and flooding will probably occur this spring in the burned areas.

HIGH WATER

The purpose of this newsletter is to address issues of concern to you, the local administrator, and to help make your role a little easier. We would like to remind you that if there is a topic you would like to see covered, let us know.

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